

HOUSE OF HORROR

PRESENTS

A PINT OF  
BLOODY  
FICTION

200 WORD  
STORIES  
JUST ENOUGH  
TO QUENCH  
YOUR BLOODY  
THIRST...



Edited By  
Nandy Ekle and S.E.COX

# House of Horror Presents:

A Pint of Bloody Fiction  
200 words to quench your  
bloody thirst

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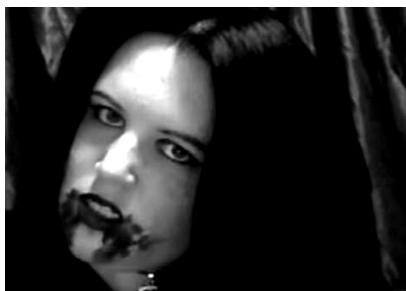
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# Introduction

*By The House Madame*



Hello there dear readers. Within the pages of this book of nightmares you will find horror stories in small doses, just enough to quench your bloody thirst. From an insomniac vampire to a library filled with human skin bound books, this collection will take you on a wild ride of chills and thrills without you even having to leave your seat.

With each story being no more than 200 words, this collection is only a fraction of what these writers can do.

Forty-Two chilling tales from many talented authors, trust me you will not want to put this book down.

I shall leave you now, my lovely readers, for I too need to quench my bloody thirst and you can only leave a man hanging upside down for so long, if you know what I mean. Please, enjoy. . .



## 200 Words

*By Neil Leckman*

“Two hundred words? That’s not possible. I use more words than that if I smash my thumb!” John turned to Stanley and shook the letter in his face.

“The killer’s letter specifically says that we have to run an ad in the Sunday issue of the Tribune and in exactly 200 words state his motivation for this killing spree.”

“I still don’t get it.” Stanley grabbed the letter from John and read it.

“He says in his letter that if we are such experienced FBI profilers, we should easily be able to do this.”

“This guy’s a nut bag! So far we can connect him to at least 102 murders over fifteen years.” John walked over to his desk and opened the top drawer. “What about the envelope? Any clues there?” He reached into the drawer as he said this.

“In the upper right hand corner there’s something written, but the stamps covering part of it.” Sam held it up so light shined through the envelope. “It says 6 PM 7/29/2010. That’s today’s date. What time is it now?”

“It’s 5:55 PM.”

“Shit!” Stanley threw the envelope on his desk. From the corner of his eye, he saw something flash and John struck.

# Pistol Whipped

*By Dave Rex*

My name is Clifford and today was a good day.

In my kitchen, I squished a bug the size of an old Buick and twice as ugly. Okay, a Matchbox Buick and way uglier.

My wife asked me to kill the bug. Okay, she demanded I do the deed. Screeched at me, actually. Like an unnerving screech owl. The bug was not a cockroach, spider or cricket, but rather an amalgam of the three. It twitched like an itch as I squished it with my finger. I rubbed my thumb and first two fingers together and they went strangely numb as I examined the bug's guts.

The guts were black, viscous and smelled of . . . battery acid. My wife turned away from me in disgust, screeching a litany of abuse.

This was not an uncommon practice.

I turned my bug-killing hand sideways, palm down, like a gang member might hold a pistol. I know because I saw it on TV. I watch a lot of TV.

I pointed my bug-gut smeared fingers at her back, cocked my thumb. . . and pulled the make believe trigger, giving her both barrels.

She dropped dead on the chequered linoleum floor. I must be careful how I scratch myself.

# The Blade Bites Deep

*By Stanley Riiks*

The screaming doesn't stop as the knife goes in, it only grows louder. The flesh sliced open further as I pull the blade out, slipping through flesh, tearing it apart. As the flesh releases the cold metal, a faint sucking sound is still audible over the ongoing screams. I plunged the blade in again, enjoying the feel of it penetrating flesh, the faint resistance as it hits skin, and then the rip as the blade bites. Then the sliding as the knife went deeper, slicing through skin and fat and muscle, urged deeper by my hand.

The screaming is loud, deafening, barely a pause for breath.

Then the blade searches deeper, finding a home for its tip, and there is a choked silence.

I've hit something. It drives me on. Blood lust wells inside me. I'm doing serious damage now. I release the blade from the sucking wound, the flesh wilting, parting. I thrust the knife down deeper, feeling the grating against bone and I twist it, urging the blade onwards to an organ to end it all. The twisting grates the tip of the blade that sends shivers down my spine. Then a gasp. I think I've hit my heart.

# INSOMNIA

*By Pat Lewis-Bussard*

Tick tock, tick tock. The sound of the clock beats out an incessant rhythm in my head. Insomnia, that dreaded state of sleeplessness that reduces its sufferer to a zombie state of mental acuity, has afflicted me for the past thirty-six hours.

I look at the white face of the clock. Its numbers covered in night-glow paint are neatly placed forty-five degrees from each other. I look away. After what seems like a few minutes, I look back at the clock and realize that an hour has passed. Did I sleep? I could tell by the burning of my eyes and throbbing in my head that if I had slept, it was for just a fleeting moment.

Tick tock, tick tock. The sing-song mocking of the clock continues. I know that I need to get up in just a few hours, but still I cannot sleep. The minutes move quickly, dancing away one by one. The accumulative effect is devastating on my body and mind. Still I do not sleep.

It is now 6:30 pm and time to get up. I open the door of the mausoleum. Tired or not, it's time to feed.

# The Toy

*By Charlotte Emma Gledson*

The paper arrived on the doorstep; chills prickled under her scalp.

“Oh hell,” she whispered.

Rolling up the paper without a glance, Emma threw it in the dustbin. A bell rang; the iciness now crept down her back and seeped into her intimate parts. “It’s him.”

The persistent shrill invaded her brain. Leaving the lounge, she ran to the kitchen, poured herself a large gin and reached for the draw.

They had first met on the tube. The closeness of their bodies and the bonding of their eyes as they huddled together inside the hot cramped carriage fuelled their desire. Her stop was Hampstead, his Heathrow. He left with her and their brewing passion was finally conducted in a wanton frenzy.

“Shhh! Stop ringing!”

Recalling their greedy sexual actions her groin stirred, but the unpredicted outcome played on her mind. Ring, ring! Running up the stairs, she unlocked the door. Pulling a hammer from her belt she walked towards her lover who struggled under the cutting restraints, bloodied and bruised. He was ringing a porcelain servant’s bell.

“You need a pee-pee? Well you can’t. They know now. . . but it’s been fun, hasn’t it? Bye-bye.”

He started to cry.



# Jilted

*By Brian Barnett*

“Good morning,” said Janice and Don in unison. They kissed each other and went about their morning routine.

Janice poured Don his morning coffee as he sat down to put on his socks and shoes. She sprinkled a hint of sugar and a couple teaspoons of creamer. She watched him over her shoulder as she added more than enough poison.

She brought it to him and blew the wisp of steam away.

“Now drink it down before it gets cold,” she said, smiling cheerily.

Don returned the smile and drank a large portion of it down. Just as he noted the bitter hint of an after-taste, a ripping pain tore through his body. He fell to the floor gasping for air and then died within seconds.

Satisfied, Janice took her time walking down the hall. Her scheme had worked perfectly. Don was out of the way and Aaron was only a phone call away. After a nice shower, she might just call him.

She opened the bathroom door and a wood plank swung down. A few rusty nails found their mark. Don had someone on the side too. By amazing coincidence, he had scheduled her murder on the same day.

# I Love My Job

*By Gary McKenzie*

Ah, a new day. The sun shines and a fresh morning breeze follows me to work. I enter the office anticipating success. In the lobby, I am greeted by warm, stale air, which tells me that the air conditioner is broken. I just know that it's going to be one of those days. My mood continues to drop as I gaze over the identical rows of gray cubicles, which await their poorly compensated servants. Reaching into my In Box, I feel the razor-thin sheet of paper as it slices between the webbing of my pointer and middle finger. I pull my hand back and watch as a drop of blood falls. Somewhere in the dirty gray carpeting, it has disappeared.

The day continues. Phones ring non-stop. Impossible-to-meet deadlines are thrust upon me.

“You want it when?”

“Stop yelling at me!”

“That’s not even my department!”

I exit the lobby a defeated man. A gloomy sky mirrors my mood as I walk to the train station. I look back. Two lights near the top of the building glare back at me like knowing eyes. I swear this building is part vampire. It sucks the life right out of you.

# Jars

*By Neil Leckman*

When my grandmother died I was left as executor of the estate--that's fancy talk for "clean up the mess." I hadn't been out to Grandma's house since 1964. That was the summer my cousin, Jill, vanished. The only thing I can still remember about her was her incredible eyes. They were golden yellow with tiny flecks of light blue, something you don't forget. She vanished one night while playing out in the woods. Her body had never been found.

I pulled into Grandma's driveway as the sun was setting and dusk was settling in. My headlights shined on a wooden door in the side of the hill behind Grandma's house--the root cellar.

Grandma loved to do canning and had even won blue ribbons at the county fair. She never let anyone in her root cellar. That was where she went to can and be alone.

Curiosity got the better of me and I walked over to the old wooden door and opened it. There were Mason Jars everywhere. One close to the door caught my attention.

Picking it up, I saw two round objects floating in the thick brown liquid--golden yellow with tiny flecks of light blue.

# Crimson

*By Meagan Elizabeth Hightower*

Rain began to pour as Lovrina ran away from Stephen's house. Within minutes, her bloodied lace dress was thoroughly soaked. Thunder and lightning filled the dark gray cloudy skies; trees seemed to try to grab her as she raced past.

She had to get away, no matter what. Now he was cold and gone. . . Was there even any redemption to be found?

Fervently, she hoped it was just a bad dream and not reality. She refused to believe it if it was true because there was no way she could have done that to him. It could not be possible that he was. . . "Lovrina," an airy voice called out to her. In the distance, she almost could hear something running noisily towards her.

She tripped over a large rock and fell over. The voice and footstep grew louder as she tried to get up. Her heart thumped loudly in her chest, and her breathing was very shallow. Stomping and crunching noises advanced closer to her and she turned around. Someone was standing there right behind her.

Lightning sparks flashed and crackled. The momentary light revealed it was a crimson-covered Stephen. He stumbled towards her and she screamed.

# Worst Thing I Ever Did

*By Jason M. Tucker*

I'd done rotten things: cheated at cards, cheated on my first and third wives, stolen a car. Hell, the car thing was right after the undead started their shit. Everyone was looting.

Never did think I was evil though, at least not until a few hours ago. Let's get to the meat of it.

I was up there with Spanks, that greasy little Italian guy with the piggy eyes. It was our turn to scavenge for grub.

Spanks was a coward, and when the rots came tearing out of the deli on Altamont, he turned to run and found himself in the clawing arms and gnashing teeth of another rot. The rots that were on me must've thought Spanks looked more appetizing because they let me go and tore into him. I left him to die. What could I do? After a bite, the rot virus hits the bloodstream fast, takes over in hours.

Leaving him isn't the worst thing I've done.

When I was tousling with the rots up there, one bit me too. Just a little bite, but I can feel the virus working. I covered the wound and came back to the shelter. You let me in.

# Yearning

*By Sara Saint John*

Sheila stared out the kitchen window and watched the world pass her by. How she yearned to be out there among normal, everyday people participating in normal, everyday chaos. She straightened her spine, fighting tears that threatened to well from her eyes. Silly to cry. She'd made her bed, as her mother was so fond of telling her. She might as well smooth the sheets and decorate around it.

It wasn't like she hurt for anything. Roland's father more than satisfied their needs. Nice house; she didn't need a car. Big, flat screen TV and all the cable channels they could watch. Her food delivered daily.

Sheila needed to keep up her strength. As experience testified, Roland could be a hand full.

Things weren't so bad. She wouldn't be the first mother to give up her life for her child.

"Mom!" Roland called in his cute little boy voice, a voice to make a mother's heart ache.

Sheila sighed. She'd hoped his nap would last longer.

Well, he was up. And she'd bet her chicken-pot-pie dinner the child was hungry.

She picked up the knife. As Roland's first tentacle rounded the corner, she drew the blade across her skin.

# A Woman of Taste

*By Angel Zapata*

Darlene's grandpa kept his dentures submerged in a glass of lukewarm blood beside his bed. He'd been doing this every night for the last thirty years, because it best preserved them and improved flesh penetration.

Darlene would have to borrow them while he slept.

She stood outside his bedroom door and carefully slipped her pinkie inside the wet hole at the back of her head.

This triggered the concealment spell she'd implanted. In seconds she disappeared.

The door creaked and grandpa growled but did not wake. In the imperfect darkness, the glass appeared to climb the air and float away. By the time Darlene descended the cellar stairs, she was visible again. She pulled the knotted string and a single light bulb illuminated the small room.

Three of her high school's most notorious bullies were gagged and chained to a rusted steam pipe at the east wall. They were bruised and terrified.

"I want to make a toast to all you little monsters." Darlene raised her glass and smiled. "Cheers." She drank down the coagulated blood and felt the beast teeth slip into the empty grooves of her black gums. "So, which one of you questioned my taste in men?"

# The Idol

*By Terence Kuch*

"You buy indigenous pieces for the museum, don't you?" Arthur said. "I've located an outstanding item." He described it.

I asked the price.

"Zero," he said. "Free."

I agreed immediately--didn't wonder why an impoverished tribe would give up its idol, and for nothing. I should have asked. Now it's too late.

Arthur got his dealer's fee and the idol was flown in yesterday evening. He was there when I took delivery. Workmen pulled the crate apart, slat by slat, and there it was: stone, about seven feet tall, bronze beak, a circle of red, unblinking eyes, and a mouth—not a mouth, but a hole as black as darkness visible.

It gazed at Arthur. Arthur screamed, his body contorting, falling apart. By that time the rest of us were running. I heard a workman cry out. I didn't look back.

It's later now. I hear the damned thing moving around the museum, scraping along on its stone legs. It enters the gallery where I'm hiding. I hold my breath and venture a glance. It's chewing on a detached human arm. Blood runs down its breast. I see its eyes, the darkness in its glowing eyes. It sees me.



# Ladies Man

*By Pat Lewis Bussard*

He had noticed her as soon as he entered the smoky bar. Her eyes, as black as the hair that framed her perfectly symmetrical face, met his gaze the moment he had cleared the portal into this netherworld of cheap booze and cheaper sex.

“Hell, ain’t nothin’ perfect,” he whispered to himself, keeping his eyes locked on his target with the same intensity of a stalker in heat. “Fer cryin’ out loud! why couldn’t she have bigger boobs?”

She took his hand and led him to the back of the bar where private rooms were provided for the girls. As soon as he settled in comfortably, he pulled her down on his lap.

“Hey baby,” he crooned. “Ain’t ya’ goin’ to dance?”

She smiled at him. He started to smile back when he noticed the cobwebs hanging from almost every inch of the ceiling.

What the – ” He never finished the word.

Later, she checked herself in the mirror and buttoned up her blouse so that no one could see the bright red hourglass shape. Her former lover’s gold chains lay on the floor. She glanced up at the cobwebs and saw her babies were about to hatch.

# Library of Souls

*By Neil Leckman*

Entering the new library, I notice all the books appear to be bound in leather. On closer inspection, I realize that it's not leather at all but skin, human skin. The books are autobiographies, perhaps even bound in the very skin of the subjects of the autobiography.

There might be a way to get the books to become a person again. I grab the closest one and look around. Perhaps if I take it over to the desk I can open the tiny lock on its side with the key that is lying there? Why does this book feel so warm?

Opening the book, I find that it's all veiny and pulsing. Dropping it onto the table in shock I quickly step back. The former resident starts to take shape. It rises out of the book, blood and viscera coagulating, bones and muscles making sucking, cracking sounds, making me want to vomit. As the jaw takes shape, gurgling sounds pass by the lips as they form.

"You opened the book. Now you must become one. You must be read!" Like an accordion, I collapse upon myself wetly. Veins pulse across my shiny new cover and the room falls silent again.

# Night Song

*By B. A. Sans*

Darkness covers me like a cold blanket as my eyes sink into the sockets. Gravity pulls my weakened bones deeper into the softness of the bed. Sleep will come soon.

Suddenly I hear the faint noise of music. I lift my head as though releasing it from the clutches of the pillow will make the sound come in clearer. As quickly as the music came, it vanishes.

Nothing. Just my imagination.

I lay my head back down and a few seconds later, the sound resumes in the swirl of blackness all around me. The song penetrates the darkness in barely audible chimes. It wants me to dance to the innocent sound.

I arise again, forgetting the lethargic moan of my muscles. My life's true focus revolves around the beautiful melody in the air, ever so slight, yet the reason for my being. I sway in the darkness to the hum that beckons me.

Closer and louder, the glorious tune plays in my ears and heart. I can hear it! I can hear it! Never anything so beautiful. See it? Eyes, horrendous! A misshapen face cuts through the darkness. The teeth! Oh God! Where did the song go? How did I . . .

# Home Movies

*By Kevin L. Jones*

George had felt uneasy all afternoon as if something ominous and unseen lurked nearby waiting to pull him into an abyss. It was disconcerting being alone in his recently departed father's house. He began to hear an unnerving high-pitched whine that seemed to be coming from the den. As soon as he stepped across the room's threshold, the eerie noise ceased. He saw the family's old super-eight projector sitting where it always had. Next to it lay a black film can that he had never seen before.

The obsidian object called to him. George felt compelled to see what secrets it would reveal. The movie began to play on the old wrinkled bed sheet that his father had always used as a makeshift screen. He had expected to see old home movies.

At first, the screen remained black, but slowly shapes began to form in the void. George could discern that it was some type of writing. As he read the ancient incantations, he began to choke. He spit up a pile of black mucus full of writhing maggots.

The room grew dark. As he lay there, breathing his last, the film ended and so did his life.

# Salvation

*By Gary McKenzie*

Wilbur has lived a full life; although, sometimes he thinks it's been too full. He now withers away lying in a hospital. Smells of urine and disinfectant randomly waft into his private room. Memories of most things have long faded from his feeble mind. Disgusted by his useless existence, he swats the room temperature bowl of tapioca pudding off his tray. On the television, mounted near the ceiling, another annoying court show begins. Frantically, he presses the buttons, but the remote control is broken again.

"No more!" he yells and throws the small box across the room. It hits the closet door and shatters. A shadow silently rises from the darkened corner. The stench of rot and decay fill the room. A figure in a blood soaked cloak slowly floats across the room and hovers near the elderly man. Wilbur looks up and sees the skeletal chin and yellow teeth of the Grim Reaper. Focusing his blurry vision beneath the dark hood, he gazes into two blackened craters and feels his body grow cold.

His last memory is a flash of a scythe's shining blade as it arcs through the air. With his dying breath, Wilbur whispers, "Thank you."

# Rorschach's Vampires

By Jason M. Tucker

Inky blobs hovered in the periphery of Gordon's vision, becoming clearer and more stable all the time. Tentacles dripped viscous ink onto the floor. Shelly couldn't see them--at least Gordon didn't think she could. She would've mentioned them, surely.

"How are your little ones?" Shelly asked. She took a noisy slurp of coffee. Some trickled down her chin, slithering down the thick folds of her neck. An inkblot that resembled a pig hovered near her left ear. Gobs of black ooze dribbled onto her shoulder.

"Huh?"

"The babes," she said. "How are they?"

He realized she meant his children. He'd almost forgotten them. They were gone, that's how they were; the hungry ink demanded it. They'd been marked just like the sow, Shelly, was marked now.

He hated small talk. A dripping ebon skull flickered in front of his eyes. It was time. He fingered the knife in his pocket. It was still sticky. He smiled up at Shelly. She smiled dumbly back. The inkblots quivered as if they knew what was coming next. The smile remained on Shelly's face until Gordon sliced into her. The ink then went to work lapping up her blood.

# The Door

*By Adam Francis Smith*

Virgil yanks as hard as he can trying to pull the chain out of the wall. It is secured too well and his efforts only result in strained shoulders.

He looks up at the door. His captor will be coming soon to feed him. If only he can free himself, he could jump the man and make his escape. He checks the door again. He plans his escape as he pulls hard on the heavy chain.

Virgil can envision the scene:

The door opens and his captor descends the stairs. The man sets a food-laden tray on the floor, just beyond the reach of the chain. Virgil's yanking has freed the chain from the wall but the man doesn't notice. Virgil swings the loose end of the chain with all his might, striking his captor. He jumps on the man and beats him unconscious, leaving him on the cold concrete. Virgil climbs the stairs and makes his way to freedom.

His eyes move to the door yet again. He gets a firm grip on the chain and doubles his efforts, pulling still harder. He checks the door. Something gives and the chain pulls from the wall. The door opens. . .

# The Devil's Quest

By S.E.COX

I didn't realise it was him until he whispered those words into my ear: "It is time. . ."

Before, he had visited me on many occasions – always a new form. But the scene, always the same, always what he liked to call his special place. The air burned my pale skin, the wind furnace-hot and scalding. He kept me going until the point of pain. Then we would leave until next time. He always wanted something more, biding his time for something perfect. I just knew it.

Do you want to know how the Devil operates? He gets inside your mind, pushing good aside. He shoves and shoves until nothing remains but thoughts of him. You cannot fight—it's a waste of time. You are his if he chooses, forever questing, forever loving.

He is all that I think about now. It is him I serve. And he has blessed me with a sign: the morning sickness. I knew then his words were true. I run my hands over my swelling belly, feeling the Devil's offspring kicking within my womb.

He hungers. He feeds. Eating me from the inside, a symbol of my love for the Master.



# Instruments of Torture

*By Flo Stanton*

Talon sat bound and blindfolded. They could not make him talk. Yes, Talon knew the site of the rendezvous, but this was his twelfth year in Special Forces, and Captain Talon was a mind control expert. He taught pain management to his troops and was confident any of them could withstand any standard torture—all except Gonzalez, a raw recruit from Texas. And maybe Rogers, his bootle boy.

It was almost laughable. Of all the soldiers they could have chosen, they selected the one man who could beat whatever they threw at him. He was almost looking forward to it.

Ajabi wheeled in a young man in a US military uniform and inserted an IV into his arm. “I will tell you what is happening, Capt. Talon, because you are blindfolded,” Ajabi said. “We are removing the blood from this young man. How old are you, son? Eighteen? He is eighteen. We will continue the exsanguinations until you reveal the location of the rendezvous, or there is no more blood left in Spec 4—what is the name on your jacket—in Spec 4 Gonzalez’s body. Then we will select another member of your unit. Perhaps Rogers?”

Drip, drip, drip.

# Spiders

*By Neil Leckman*

“Here you go friends.”

Jonathon tosses the grasshoppers into the giant webs in his living room. Within seconds, they run out to kill and wrap them up for later. There are tiny skinny spiders with long legs and fat hairy ones with sagging bellies and large fangs that drip venom. They come from every corner of the room to feast. Some stay and stare up at him. The dim light of the apartment reflected off their multifaceted eyes. Giant egg sacs hang everywhere ready to hatch.

“I’m sorry. I will go and get some more bugs.” Turning, he leaves the apartment, locking his door behind him.

Realizing that grasshoppers aren’t enough, he kills a stray cat, and returning, places it gently in the webs. Jonathon has always liked spiders since he was six years old. They are his friends and family and they count on him to survive.

It still doesn’t seem to be enough for them. Soon there will be thousands of tiny babies everywhere. He notices then that many of the sacs are empty. They stand silent and stare by the thousands.

“I’m sorry it’s not enough.” Lying down and closing his eyes, he feeds the hungry children.

# The Lady Or The Vampire?

*By Ken L. Jones*

They were a mob and such mobs were common in those days. They had torches, pitchforks and blunt instruments.

They had much to be righteously angry about. Every morning brought fresh horrors as their most beautiful daughters were discovered with twin puncture marks on their throats. All they knew for sure was a lone figure disappeared into the high mountains above their village, into the moonlit ruins of the ancient fortress there every night. Finally, they had had enough. As they made their way up the winding path to the fortress, their mayor warned them against any sudden action.

The angry villagers swarmed into the interior of the ruined fortress and startled two figures in the light of the full moon.

One was a mousy looking teenage girl with shy downcast eyes; the other, an elongated menacing looking aristocrat. The vigilantes surged forward as their mayor tried to restrain them. The crowd fell on the male figure and staked him to the ground despite his protests of innocence. As they did so, the petite wisp of a girl arose cackling on leather wings escaping their justice as she vanished into the gathering storm clouds.

Her nights of hunting would continue.

# The Shoot

*By Brian Rosenberger*

Officer Mustaine puts the vehicle in park, looks in his mirror, wipes the mustard from his moustache, and proceeds to the door. The home is vintage white trash, lawn severely in need of mowing, beer cans scattered like fallen leaves. He knocks repeatedly—no answer. He forces the door open.

Roaches scamper. Inside he finds a ten-year-old girl, approximate weight 200 pounds, teeth so rotten a dentist would grimace, wearing nothing but clothing fashioned from black garbage bags. Her twin sister lies on a filthy mattress, nude save for the dirt, equally obese. She fails to register the officer's presence due to drug induced daydreams.

A speaker blares vintage Deep Purple. A caucasian male, bald, appears from one of the side rooms. His shirt is opened to the waist, revealing a smooth chest and a gauntlet of chains draped about his tattooed neck. One hand holds an object Mustaine can't quite make out.

Instinctively, Mustaine drops one hand to his pistol grip, ready. With the other, he shakes hands with Baldy. The object Baldy holds is a camera. Baldy smiles, shark-like.

Officer Mustaine massages his already erect cock, returns the smile looking at the twins.

"Let's do this shit."

# Funeral At The Louisiana Bayou

*By Theresa C. Newbill*

Their cries were blistered with desperation as they passed through the gates of hell, smoky with acid rain and malevolent spirits filled with disdain.

Gratitudes heaped high against a requiem of silk robes and myrrh incense where personages of flesh and bone couldn't hear the prayers of the children, whose tongues had stopped with time.

Night-blooming cereus blessed the funeral deep in the Louisiana Bayou, blanketing the moonlight on the river with unfathomable appeal while transition shredded skin into crumpled up millennia.

We knew them. We felt the previous currents of their sub microscopic energy reverberate with precise sweetness over the electric lick of photons that seared through the twisted core of green fields.

We experienced the fear of the craven as they turned and ran, their faces flushed beneath the whiteness of the moment when the ashes of the dead were unearthed and scattered in water rituals under a pagan's embrace.

Jettisoning waves canvassed the boats with smeared charcoal against a blood red sky while birds sang through leafy encounters of bestial beauty where their imperative voices screamed

with liberation.

I've tracked and plowed, starved for the  
sake of my soul, as darkness opened into light  
with the memory of you.

# The Winner

*By Gayle Arrowood*

The beauty contestants stood on stage holding small bouquets of tulips and daffodils, new beginnings.

The principal stood at the front center of the stage, set up in the gym. When he read the final vote, one of the girls started to step forward, but stopped. She smirked as if she was the only possible choice. But the man said, "Kellen Mavel is the first runner-up. And Mary Corpus wins."

She paraded forward and from one side of the stage to the other. She laughed softly, waved and threw kisses. She even tossed her bouquet to the crowd when the principal handed her the bouquet of red roses—twelve bright red flowers. They matched her dress and satin shoes. She choked back tears, but a few slid out. Then came the cascade of joyous dew drops.

Kellen's face was scarlet. She clenched her fists, hurried toward the winner and said, "I want to be the first to hug you." Kellen stepped forward, put one arm around the winner, as the bouquet fell to the floor. She pointed a lightweight revolver at Mary and emptied the chamber. She turned to the stunned audience.

"The bitch's a whore. That's how she won."

# Water's Pity

*By Chris Keaton*

She wept at the river's edge. The loss of her child left her in this state. Tears fell from her cheek blending with the river water. An ancient being watched this miserable girl from the murky depths. Her honest outpouring of emotion brought pity to this water-locked creature, a sensation that it hadn't felt in so very long that it shivered. It knew loss and the sorrow it can bring. Convulsing, it tore itself free from the weeds and roots that had grown to cover it over its long years of sleep. The being reached up with its algae greened skin nearly breaking the surface of the water. It longed to help the poor girl.

The girl wiped her eyes and looked out over the smooth flowing river. This was a spot she loved since childhood and hoped to share with her daughter. The thought brought another sob. A splash drew her attention to a cluster of green waterlogged branches that queerly looked like a hand.

In a flash, the creature grabbed her ankle and pulled.

The girl vainly clutched at the shore, but she was pulled under before she could take another breath.

The being knew she would suffer no more.



# Little Nikita

By S.E.COX

I saw her again today, always standing in the same place—her hair black as night and eyes of fire. From behind, you would think her a child lost in the street, but to get close to her would be your demise.

They say her soul was baked in hell and now she has crawled out to wreak revenge on the unwed mother who discarded the baby in the dumpster on prom night and left her there to die. And die she did—amongst a week's worth of garbage. But her soul was taken, taken by the dark lord, taken below and nurtured as if she were mortal. He gave her a body and a purpose. He gave her a name: Little Nikita.

And now she stands in the same place at the same time, night after night. Watching. Waiting. Collecting the souls of discarded fetuses to take back to her master. One day there will be a revolution.

They say it's only a horror story to scare promiscuous teenagers into not having sex until marriage. But I saw her today. I watched her as I lay back and let the old nurse wrench my sins from my womb.

# Down In a Hole

*By Gary McKenzie*

We float in a darkened world, sticking close to each other like a warm pudding. The slow squeaking of wheels is our first warning that the orderlies in white are coming back. The thunderous sound of the door slamming open precedes the blinding light that soon follows. Like a solar eclipse, a long, rectangular shadow gradually blocks out the source of light. Another autopsy begins.

From high above, one similar to us clings to a stiffened finger. Hovering with uncertainty, the red chameleon reaches out to us then slightly pulls back as if rethinking its decision. With ninja-like grace, it drips off its host and silently descends down into the crowd of mingled strangers. The huddled masses rise and fall with the newly formed ripples. A fresh disease has been added to the mix.

Immediately and without prejudice, the invader infects and destroys its surrounding neighbors. Like zombies, the tainted victims do the same to their helpless comrades.

The more the contagion grows, the harder we pray for the cleansing touch of bleach to anoint and save us from eternal damnation. The bloody drains of the county morgue desperately need to be cleaned. The janitor is a lazy bastard.

# Gift Wrap

*By Neil Leckman*

Wrapping things up has always been something I enjoyed. I don't like flimsy-ass wrapping paper people use. It tears too easily. I like Saran Wrap, locks in freshness and creates an airtight seal. The family lets me do this even though the gifts are obvious—except for the gift back behind the tree in the corner.

Nobody can get a good look at it.

"Larry, I believe you have finally found a way to wrap gifts so the children still have to wait until Christmas morning to find out what it is."

"This year, William, I wanted it to be special for them. You moved away from your old friends and not much later Grandma disappeared. She always loved Christmas more than any of the rest of us."

"You're right. Larry. And now she would say that we all must sleep. Tomorrow brings wonder and joy."

Larry was slow waking and missed the first gifts being opened.

"William, pull mine out so the boys can open it." It was heavy and took time to pull it out far enough. "Merry Christmas boys."

The boys tore into the package making a big hole. Crying in shock, the boys looked up. "It's Grandma!"

# In The Moment

*By Nandy Ekle*

Our lips touch, lightly at first, then solidly. I feel all the breath leave my lungs with his kiss as his tongue enters my mouth, tapping my teeth as if they are a keyboard. A feeling of dizziness fogs my head and my teeth part to let the sweet-tasting muscle in. I don't remember what life was before this moment, and I'm sure there will be no life when it is over. And I don't want it to ever end. I greet his tongue with my own and feel the two of them dance in their own ballet of lust.

His hands travel gently over my body; my own hands locked tightly behind his head. He breaks the seal between our lips and his tongue glides to my cheek. His hands have left my body and now hold my face between them. Sucking in a quick breath, I am unable to open my eyes. I feel his mouth tasting me from my cheek down to my neck. Not even his teeth piercing my skin can break the spell of this moment.

His tongue laps at the blood spilling down my neck as I feel my life flow into his throat.

# The Good Husband

*By Christina Hugh*

She looked deeply into her husband's eyes. They'd had a big fight, but they'd reached a turning point. Peace had reigned for two weeks, three days, five hours and thirteen minutes. Maybe she'd been harsh, but PMS was like that. She wasn't responsible for her actions. Anyway, everything was better now.

Did his eyes hold a look of reproach? She fisted her hands and narrowed her eyes. She twisted up her mouth and a bitter word almost escaped, but then she took a deep breath.

Relaxed, she smiled indulgently, even blew him a kiss. It was just her imagination, no need to ruin a beautiful moment. Some people might disagree with the measures she'd taken—even argue that her behaviour was unfeminine, but no one could disagree that those measures were effective.

Of course, there was give and take, push and pull, no free lunch. On the one hand, things were peaceful and happy.

On the other, he wasn't quite as handsome these last couple weeks, and she didn't like the way he never looked her straight in the eye anymore. She swirled the jar, but his eyes just got more loopy. Oh well. She put them back in the cabinet.

# Bellie's Bucket

*By AJ Brown*

Bellie said the bucket makes it all better, makes it go away.

Anna set the whiskey bottle in the pail, lowered it, waited, pulled it back up. The bottle had vanished. She nodded. She strolled up the hill to the gray stone building that towered above all the houses in the village.

“Papa?” she called. “Are you awake?”

Down in the den, he slumbered, drool dripping down his bare chest, hand in his pants. Anna gagged, her stomach churned.

“Papa?” she called again.

He grunted, shifted in his chair, farted.

“Bastard.”

Anna left the room, came back a moment later, axe in hand.

She carried the pieces of Papa's body down the hill in a wheel barrel. Nothing she could do about the blood, but the parts. . .

A foot went into the bucket, followed by a hand and parts of his torso. She lowered the pail, pulled it back up. The pieces were gone. Anna repeated the process over and over until only Papa's chest was left. She reached a bloodied hand through broken ribs, fingers searching.

“Just as I thought,” she whispered and then set Papa's chest in the bucket and lowered it. “He never did have a heart.”

# Faceless

*By Nate Burleigh*

“Madam, can you hear me?” the medic said.

She couldn't speak. Pain in her head, eye, face, right arm, and chest told her the car accident had been bad. Cool air wafted over her skin as he removed clothes from her shattered body. The brightness of the pen light blinded her momentarily.

She gasped as he pulled her fractured arm out from under her.

“Hold pressure here,” he told a volunteer fire fighter. The young man placed his hand over the bandage on her arm.

*Don't do it.* It had happened once before when she hurt herself snowboarding. That's when she knew she had the gift.

He placed two fingers in her palms. “Squeeze my fingers.”

*I'm sorry.* She squeezed.

He flinched. Blood flowed down his face from several lacerations opening up in his forehead. His left eye exploded, raining vitreous fluid across Cassie's naked body. Skin peeled away from his right cheek, revealing his jaw. Teeth shattered and his nose disintegrated. His chest imploded, puncturing both lungs. Blood spurted from his arm. Tears spilled from Cassie's eyes.

“I'm sorry,” she said. He fell, his lungs bucking for air.

# Shard

*By Brandon L. Rucker*

He lunged at her clumsily but missed. That imprecision cost him. Unknown to him was the fact that she had a weapon. The moment he lunged, she used cat-quick reflexes to duck and avoid his attack.

She scrambled to the basement floor. This allowed her to strike swift just as he recovered. She used a broken mirror shard to slice into his Achilles as if it was a thin ribbon made of fine silk. He screamed in agony, lumbered to the floor like a wounded animal shot in the wild.

Predator had become prey. As blood began to flow from the injured tendon without pause, endorphins and adrenaline masked his pain as he struggled to get back on his feet and finish the job. She had other plans. She wanted to see more of his blood before she was finished with him. She kicked him in his back, landed him again. She struck the other Achilles. Blood ran.

She restrained him to apply a sedative, undressed him and pierced his genitals with the shard. She sliced the sack, severed the member. Torrential blood flowed. She needed to be sure her husband paid for what he did to their young daughter.



# Shadow

*By Neil Leckman*

Twenty years ago, my shadow left me. Something else took its place, something much darker than a shadow and far more devious. It stalked my every waking moment, waiting for the chance to take my place. I could feel it every moment of every day, trying to get inside me. Only in darkness did I find relief, because without light there can be no shadows.

I found this cave two weeks ago and have gone ever deeper into the velvet welcoming darkness. Finally, I can be at peace. The shadow has lost and I am still whole. Sounds travel quite a distance in caves so I knew they were looking for me long before they knew they had found me.

“He’s back here somewhere.”

I can hear them moving closer and there’s a dim light in the distance.

“I found his backpack and some food wrappers over here.”

Light faded as they moved away for a moment.

“Look over here. There are tracks in the mud heading in that direction.” Small sounds echo off the walls as they followed my trail. The cave went no further.

“Wait, I see him. Bring more light.” Light, and with it the shadows. I screamed.

# Jack

*By Francis W. Alexander*

One day at the celebration, a plate-like object hovered above one of the food tables and dropped something that splashed into the apple pie.

“Throw that away,” one of the ladies told Jack, who had missed the incident.

But he couldn't do it. “It's probably nothing but a bird dropping,” he mumbled.

The pie shot undulating waves of mesmerizing aroma into the air. Unable to resist, Jack wrapped it in aluminium foil and hurried home. Its sweet smell became stronger, made his stomach growl as he walked. Jack contemplated snacking on it but changed his mind when he saw the hut in the distance. He stopped by Simon's and invited his friend, who came right over.

“You sure it's safe?” Simon asked.

Jack nodded then unwrapped it.

Having decided to eat around the crater in the center where the object had fallen, Jack stuck the pie with his thumb.

“A plum?” he asked. Eyeing the reddish object, he put it in his mouth. “Mmmmm,” he mumbled. “Tastes good.”

Jack screamed, blood spurting through his lips and nose. Horrified, Simon watched Jack dissolve, a blob forming on the seat with thumb gravitating to the center.

# Three Degrees Of Freedom

*By Theresa C. Newbill*

The sound of an old harmonica playing whistles up the strong winds from wood-churned paths, instructing me not to fear the joy of contemplation but to embrace it.

Myrrh, Tansy, Violets, the black cloth of dark earth you loved, cover me with the stain of your white skin, the leap of faith, the leap of trust.

Blue residue under the protective arc of a tall Rowan Tree  
clings like the scent of wet fog as tranquillity precipitates the effects of moonlight radiant with memory.

Everything we've touched has burned away slowly. Only  
when I close my eyes to the material world is when I see the invincibility of a broken branch.

So I walk and follow the path giving myself up to God, wondering if He will forsake me for another more worthy, slowly letting the pain flow out of me along with a rivulet of purifying sweat.

I sculpt what's missing in my blindness and let your voice revolve around me in the darkness.

Between words, between the lines of what is permissible and plausible, I begin to understand the three degrees of freedom.

Spirit enters us through death, discipline and grief one beautiful cell at a time.

# Lost Connection

*By Neil Leckman*

Walking through the park has always been a time for me to relax and reflect in the cool night breeze as it rustles the leaves and lightly kisses my fevered brow. The smell of pine as I walk down the path under pale moonlight lifts my spirit.

Stopping for a moment, I lean against a young tree. I can feel the rough bark through my sweat soaked shirt as I slide down to sit. Night sounds filling the air as the nocturnal creatures come out to feed and play. Looking around I notice that almost hidden in the bushes I just walked past is a dark shape.

Somehow it seems out of place there.

I walk over to investigate. It's hard to see because it's hidden so well. Pale moonlight reflects off lifeless eyes and I stifle a scream. That is when I see the blood everywhere. I know that it's too late but I need to call for help.

Reaching into my pocket, I pull out my phone. Looking at my own blood soaked hands holding the phone I see that the screen says, "Lost Connection." Laughing I suddenly realize just how true that statement really is.

# Unpleasant sensation

*By Rish Benjamin Outfield*

The dog knew something was wrong long before I did. He looked around the apartment, eyes darting nervously from corner to corner. Before long, a yellow puddle appeared on the wood panel floor around his haunches.

“Manitoba?” I asked, somewhere between concern and anger.

The dog whined and darted across the room and under the coffee table.

Wow. I had never seen him do anything like this before. I started to rise to check on my normally-reliable pet, but something moved in the periphery of my vision—something on the right side of the room. I looked in that direction, but saw nothing.

The hairs on my arms began to dance, as if I were standing in front of a refrigerator. I turned to look at my dog again, to ask him if this was why he--

To my left, a shadow moved, the shape of something approaching me. My heart clenched in my chest, and my head whirled to see what was moving toward me.

Nothing was there.

Not anymore, at least.

At that moment, I felt an uncomfortable wetness and glanced down to see the stain growing on the front of my pants.

# Killer's Journal

*By Jack Home*

I put down my book, *Exeutions*, and sighed. If only I could try out my favourites. A sudden brainwave made my dreams come true.

All my exes fell for it: I'd won \$1000000 and wanted to meet up. Sheer egotists - as if. . .

Sandra's look of surprise, as I put the noose around her neck, was nothing compared with her bulging eyes and lolling tongue as I strung her up. I cut her down and sliced her abdomen open, pulling out her intestines and heart. It was surprisingly tricky, everything being so slimy. I was afraid someone would hear her screams - perhaps I should have let her swing for longer. After burning her heart, I chopped her body into quarters - well, in half (a waste of effort, her being dead).

I tied Lorraine's hands on to one of my horses; her feet to another. Her shrieks were deafening as they walked in opposite directions, and the climax, when she became a human Christmas cracker, was incredibly messy.

Eleni's initial howls became dull moans. I was bored by the time she finally died. I don't know what Vlad the Impaler saw in it.

Sorry, Madam Guillotine, I'm out of exes. . .



## ~Meet the Authors~

### Neil Leckman

Neil Leckman was born in Spokane, Washington in 1956. His family soon misplaced the newborn lad during a company picnic. He was found and raised by weasels in a little den off the main highway; it was here that he learned to love road kill at an early age. Discovered by a band of roving zombies, he was brought into the world of the living as a hostage. After negotiating his release for a can of beef stew, authorities enrolled him in a local school. It was there that he discovered his love for books. After being kicked out of the library for eating one of the classics, he became a drifter, moving across the land and living off the words of others. One day he decided it was time to give some of those words back. He is currently living in Colorado.

### Dave Rex

Born a perfect angel in Wilmington, Delaware in 1971, Dave Rex found his inner demon at the impressionable young age of nine after watching a certain horror movie classic called "An American Werewolf In London". Since then, he has seen and been inspired by countless horror stories, movies and novels. His writing, in fact, is heavily influenced by horror flicks from the 80s. Although gory and campy horror writing is his first passion,



he has been known to pen the occasional dark fantasy story and even poetry. Dave greatly admires Stephen King and, through his own unique voice, strives to reach King's remarkable level of success. Dave's "*unapologetic*" and ever growing body of work speaks for itself, but so does his horrific tale, "*A Taste of Italia*," winning first place in Black Hound's 2009 '*Be My Valentine*' flash fiction competition. More recently, Dave's short story of innocence twisted, "*Mabel D's Balloon*," won a New Bedlam Project award. In all, Dave Rex has been published more than a dozen times in print since 2007. He currently lives and writes in Southern California, hoping to soon find a home for his premiere novel of terror and redemption, *Bleeder*.

### Stanley Riiks

Stanley Riiks is a genius. It's official, he's a signed-up member of MENSA and everything. Oh, and it's pronounced Ricks, if you were wondering. Stanley Riiks describes himself as the action man (GI Joe for you Yanks!) of fiction, but with the appendage attached and in fully working order. He can prove it, if you like. Stanley Riiks is a writer and critic, currently more critic than writer. His work has appeared in numerous magazines, journals and books. Stanley Riiks enjoys starting every sentence with his name and writing about himself in the third person. Apart from writing and critiquing, Mr Riiks (yes, you may call him that) leads a scholarly life involving as much sex,

money, travel, crime and punishment as possible. There is also some alcohol involved in there somewhere. His latest project is as part of the Morpheus Tales review team. He is on [www.myspace.com/stanleyriiks](http://www.myspace.com/stanleyriiks)

### Pat Lewis-Bussard

Pat Bussard has worked as a journalist and is currently the public relations director for a college in Virginia. She writes a bi-weekly column, *Weird World*, focusing on the paranormal for an entertainment magazine. In addition, she is the founder of a paranormal research team, The Ghost Writers ([www.theghost-writers.com](http://www.theghost-writers.com)).

### Charlotte Emma Gledson

Charlotte Emma Gledson currently resides in the southcoastal town of Gosport UK. With over thirty short stories and poems published in anthologies and magazines, including the acclaimed "*Serial Killer Magazine*," Charlotte also reviews books and is poetry editor for House Of Horror Ezine. Charlotte is currently penning a supernatural novel called *Bluebells For My Baby*. Her collection of twisted tales entitled *The Lonely Tree, and Other Twisted Tales of Torment* is out now on Amazon.co.uk, and all other good retailers. You will find her latest story appearing in Jason Baker's *Abandoned* collection in September 2010. Married with four gregarious children and a vast collection of ventriloquist dummies and porcelain dolls, she finds time

relaxing with sips of wine, vodka, and lets her hair down indulging in karaoke.

### Brian Barnett

Brian Barnett lives with his wife, Stephanie, and son, Michael, in Frankfort, Kentucky. To date, he has published over sixty stories since he began publishing in November, 2008. He has been accepted by over twenty-five publications, online and in print, including several anthologies. He was co-editor of the anthology *Toe Tags: 21 Spine-Tingling Tales from the Best New Authors of Horror*, with William Pauley, III and has published a collection of horror stories titled *State of the Dark*.

### Gary McKenzie

Gary McKenzie absolutely loves the challenge of writing stories with only 200 words. It's probably 150 more words than he speaks in a year (unless grunting can be considered actual words). His child friendly *Gingerbread Kingdom* books are conveniently available at Amazon.com. They're so good you'll want to buy two of them.

### Meagan Elizabeth Hightower

Meagan is a student at Peace College, and is trying to earn a Liberal Studies major with a minor in English. Currently she is trying to write a novel, but she writes short stories and poetry in her

spare time. She has been published many times in her school's magazine, "*The Prism*," since 2007, and used to be a staff writer in her school's newspaper, "*The Peace Times*." Due to her young age, she has no other publishing history, but has been writing stories since she was almost six years old. Other than writing, her hobbies include reading, debating, researching and raising awareness of Pulmonary Fibrosis. Since her mother's passing in 2009, Meagan now possesses the time, ability and, most importantly, energy to finally be able to submit her stories.

### *Jason M. Tucker*

Jason M. Tucker is a full time writer living in Southern California, where the sun always shines, the ocean is always blue, and the cost of living is sure to rise . . . just like all those damned zombies. His book, *Meat City & Other Stories*, is available now.

### *Sara Saint John*

Sara Saint John writes stories of good versus evil, horror, and the healing power of love. *BLACK HEARTS & RED BLOOD DREAMS* is now available at [www.darkmythproductions.com/mythmart](http://www.darkmythproductions.com/mythmart). *BLOOD ATONEMENT* is available at [atwww.mybookstoreandmore.com](http://atwww.mybookstoreandmore.com). *TRUST THE NIGHT* is available everywhere under ISBN 1-60504-118-1.

## Angel Zapata

Angel Zapata has fiction appearing in the *Toe Tags Anthology*, *House of Horror: Best of 2009*, *Mausoleum Memoirs*, "Flashes in the Dark," *The New Flesh*, and *Howl: Dark Tales of the Feral and Infernal*. Visit

<http://arageofangel.blogspot.com>

## Terrence Kuch

Terrence Kuch is a consultant, avid hiker, and world traveler. His publications and acceptances include "Clockwise Cat," "Colored Chalk," *Creature Features* anthology, *Dead Bells* anthology, *Encounters From the Asylum* anthology, *The Next Time* anthology, "Marginalia," "Noctober," "North American Review," "Northwest Review," "qarrtsiluni," "Sonar-4," "Timber Creek Review," and others. He has studied at the Writers Center, Bethesda, Maryland, and participated in the Mid-American Review Summer Fiction Workshop. His sci-fi novel, *The Seventh Effect*, is scheduled for publication in March, 2011.

## B.A. Sans

B. A. Sans emerged into the literary world through lollipops and razorblades. His first published work was a children's story, but darkness soon filled his heart and his pen. Shadowed images appeared through his words to create horrific stories of despair that were feasted upon by readers of

"Necrotic Tissue," the "Horror Zine," and countless other literary magazines. Now the demon inside of B. A. Sans has merged with the artist inside to please the sinister cravings of horror and paranormal romance readers everywhere.

*Ken L. Jones*

For the last thirty years, Ken L. Jones has been professionally active in the world of popular culture. He first gained notice for his numerous articles and interviews in all of the comic book trade magazines where he most recently showed up in the Comics Buyer's Guide as a critic of comic books. He later worked prolifically as a writer of comic books at Disney and Harvey Comics and on many independent titles including the one he co-created with horror director David Todd Ocvirk, the well-regarded horror tome *Uncle Tickle*. He has worked as a writer and producer in TV and the movies most notably with Brian Yuzna. He currently is an editor and heavy contributor to "*Uncle Jam Magazine*." He has contributed a short story, "*Grandfather Jack-O'-Lantern*," and many poems to "*House of Horror*" and its original anthology title, *Stitched Up*.

*Kevin L. Jones*

Kevin L. Jones has been involved with the creative arts for many years. He often assists his father, Ken L. Jones, in the creation and writing of such comic books as *Uncle Tickle*, *Corruption*, and

*Smite*. In addition to that, he has published an interview or two. He recently contributed several short stories to “*House of Horror*” and a short story, “The Photo Shoot,” to their original anthology *Stitched Up*.

### *Adam Francis Smith*

Adam Francis Smith is a full-time watcher of people and a part-time writer about what he finds. Adam was born and raised in Chicago, Illinois and is a product of the Chicago Public School System; something he's thankful for, having learned as much in the halls as in the classrooms. Adam has recently had stories published in or at: “*A Thousand Faces*,” *Demominds.com*, *TalesOfWorldWarZ.com*, *TheHarrow.com*, and “*Mystic Signals*.” His stories, regardless of genre, tend to find typical people in atypical situations, working their way out by using any means at their disposal they hadn't known they possessed before. Adam believes that people represent the best and the worst that the world has to offer, and he tries to prove it in his writing.

### *Flo Stanton*

Flo keeps a pistol from her father's days as a deputy coroner on her desk for inspiration. Her DH (Darling Husband) John and she were researching the scene of a historical murder and became witnesses in a homicide that took place 124 years later. Her next-door neighbor shot his wife dead before killing himself mere feet from her

bedroom window as she slept. It makes life... interesting. In the horror anthology "*Traps*" (DarkHart Press), her story "*Ephesia*" shares space with tales by Stoker, World Fantasy, and Horror Guild winners. (The entire anthology receives enthusiastic kudos from Ellen Datlow.) One of her mysteries is featured in the anthology "*Studies in Scarlet*"; other stories, poems, reviews, literary articles, and artwork have appeared in numerous newspapers and magazines. With John, another artist and writer, Flo has taught editing classes at Marian University. For links to publications, additional credits and more info, check out her website. [www.flostanton.com](http://www.flostanton.com).

### Brian Rosenberger

Brian Rosenberger lives in a cellar in Marietta, GA and writes by the light of captured fireflies. His most recent book is *And For My Next Trick*, a collection of his short stories awaits release in October. Additional updates can be found at <http://home.earthlink.net/~brosenberger>.

### Gayle Arrowood

Gayle is a pack rat writer and artist. She throws nothing away. She has file cabinets full to the brim with writing, closets filled to the top with paintings. No murals yet. She still has the poems and stories she wrote back in the 80's. So the packrat lives within her mind, heart and spirit, and it makes sense that she lives in the Mahavi desert. Rats run wild there, all kinds of rats. Even



packrats. She loves writing and painting. She can do very good work, but that comes after many drafts. Once in a while, she writes fast and furious. The story or poem is good, very good, and is picked up fast. So she leaves you with this thought: just watch for her reaching the big time.

### Chris Keaton

Chris Keaton, an Air Force vet who grew up in the Midwest, but now avoids sunburns in Tucson, Arizona with his family, writes primarily for film, but will write in any medium if it calls for strong visuals. Keaton has co-written a young-adult novel that's in the final editing stages based on his feature length screenplay "*The Mosaic*." He has just completed script doctor/re-writing work on a feature thriller, '*The Registry*' set to begin filming May, 2011. The Oklahoma Horror film fest has nominated his feature horror/thriller '*The Killing Jar*' for best unproduced horror script. Keaton has had several short scripts produced which are now hitting the film fest circuit. His short 'The Devil's Toy' has won best horror short and best short film at the Cape Fear Independent Film Festival and will be seen at a film fest near you soon, including Dragon\*Con film fest September 4, 2010. You can find samples of Chris Keaton's writing and news of his upcoming projects at [www.chris-keaton.com](http://www.chris-keaton.com).

### Nandy Ekle

Nandy Ekle writes from her couch in Texas. She has written stories since she was a teenager, and

they just keep getting darker. Nandy has stories published in various places on the web, and several here with *House of Horror*, where she is the co-editor.

### S.E.COX

S.E.COX is a 26-year-old mother living in the West Midlands UK with her artist/writer boyfriend Darren James, her two darling little girls and the voices in her head. She has been writing for thirteen years, publishing her first novel, *Rosella, Forbidden Love* in April, 2009. Her work has appeared in a few publications such as “*The Monsters Next Door*,” “*Flashes in the Dark*,” “*Pagan Imagination*,” *Elements of Horror Anthology*, *Twisted Tales Anthology* by Pill Hill Press and more. She is now the editor in chief of *House of Horror*.

### Cristina Hugh

Cristina Hugh is a California lawyer and aspiring novelist. Her blog is [chrishugh.blogspot.com](http://chrishugh.blogspot.com).

### AJ Brown

AJ Brown is. . . What he is, no one is particularly sure, but we know he is... His works have appeared in “*Necrotic Tissue*,” “*SNM Horror Magazine*,” “*Allegory*,” and “*Bards and Sages*,” among others. And the search is on to figure out just who or what AJ Brown is. . .

### Nate Burleigh

To put it plain and simple, Nate is a horror writer. He loves to find that spot in a person's soul that makes them cower in the corner of a room—be it shock horror, mystery, sci-fi, erotic, dark, or thrilling. He writes stories to entertain. To date he has published a bakers dozen of stories in various venues to include online e-zines and print anthologies. His debut novel, *Sustenance* is nearly ready to send out to the publishers.

### Brandon L. Rucker

Brandon L. Rucker is a writer and recording artist from Indiana. He claims to be a true Libra, if there is such a thing. He is currently the Music Coordinator for *Liquid Imagination* literary webzine where he provides musical interpretation of poems. In the autumn of 2010, he will retire from his musical role to begin his new role as Micro-fiction Editor for the webzine. He has had fiction and poetry published recently by *blink ink online*, *Dreams and Screams* print anthology, *Liquid Imagination* webzine and *Static Movement Print Special # 2*. He has been working diligently on a novel so top secret that if he told you about it he would have to kill you.

### Francis W. Alexander

Francis Wesley Alexander resides in Sandusky, Ohio, USA where he endures working on a slow computer.

### Theresa C. Newbill

Theresa C. Newbill is a self-described free spirit and former elementary school teacher turned writer. Her work has been widely published in various print and online magazines and she has received numerous awards for her writing.

### Rish Benjamin Outfield

Rish Outfield is a screenwriter and host of the Dunesteef Audio Fiction Magazine ([www.dunesteef.com](http://www.dunesteef.com)), where he rambles on fortnightly, writing, acting, and doing little voices to his heart's content. He is also scared of virtually everything.

### Jack Home

Jack is married and lives in Plymouth, England, where he works for the local theatre. He loves writing short stories, poems and articles and had had quite a few published in various newspapers, magazines, ezines, websites and anthologies in UK, USA and Australia. Jack has just finished a creative writing course with the Writers' Bureau, which he thoroughly enjoyed (and would recommend). Horror is his favourite genre and he enjoys writing it in gory glory, which surprises his friends. Shakespeare is his favourite writer and he particularly loves Sonnet 29.

## Books from House of Horror

*“Mausoleum Memoirs”*

*“Creature Features”*

*“House of Horror Best of 2009”*

*“Frightening Fables and Freaky Fairy  
Tales”*

*“Stitched Up”*

## Coming Soon

*“Tales of a Woman Scorned”*

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*“Revolution City” - By Darren James*

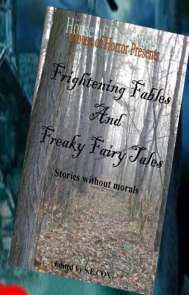
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*“False Awakenings”*

*“Sand's of Time”*

*“Tales from the Dark Path”*

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